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ABSTRACT

The use of incentives by businesses is a well-accepted pattern of management-employee collaboration. Increasingly, U.S. businesses are using incentives to encourage employees to stay healthy. Research in the field of behavior modification indicates that positive reinforcement, negative consequences and restrictions, and feedback have great potential as strategies for encouraging employees to stay healthy. Although many program planners feel that cash is the strongest motivator, other companies have achieved success in motivating employees by offering noncash positive incentives, negative incentives, and social support. Location, convenience, and cost have also been found to be important in encouraging employees to make long-term health changes. Some possible types of incentives to encourage healthy life-styles in businesses are corporate policies and practices, facilities and equipment, personal recognition, tangible rewards, teams and competitions, and health care benefits. Whatever the incentive used, incentive programs have had the greatest impact when they include rewards for employees who are already healthy as well as those employees who wish to make changes in their health practice patterns. Incentives are not effective if they are viewed as coercive or manipulative. Small, visible, quickly earned rewards seem to encourage people to take the first steps in health promotion and can be effective when starting a program or when attempting to increase participation rates. (Twenty-seven examples of companies that offer incentives for participation in worksite physical fitness programs are included in this document.) (MN)

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WBGH WORKSITE WELLNESS SERIES

USING INCENTIVES TO PROMOTE EMPLOYEE HEALTH

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Washington Business Group on Health
Washington, D.C.

WBGH Worksite Wellness Series

USING INCENTIVES TO PROMOTE EMPLOYEE HEALTH

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February, 1986

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USING INCENTIVES TO PROMOTE EMPLOYEE HEALTH

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USING INCENTIVES TO PROMOTE EMPLOYEE HEALTH

WHY ARE BUSINESSES OFFERING INCENTIVES TO PROMOTE HEALTH?

Increasingly, U.S. businesses are using incentives to encourage their employees to stay healthy.

Incentives--which include policies, practices, and awards designed to incite people to action--vary from large cash payments made to employees who alter a damaging health habit such as smoking or over-earing, to giving company t-shirts to everyone screened for high blood pressure, to offering rebates on fees for employees who join exercise classes.

But why are the incentives needed to encourage employees to stay well? Why should employers be interested in providing incentives to encourage people to behave in a way that will be personally beneficial?

The growing use of incentives to promote employee health can be attributed to several factors.

The use of incentives by companies is a well-accepted pattern of management-employee collaboration. Incentives have been used extensively by many companies to:

- Improve work performance (bonuses for completing a contract on schedule);
- Increase sales (all-expenses-paid trip for the top salesperson);
- Reduce accidents or waste of materials (cash awards to the department with the best safety record);
- Reward loyalty (awards for five, ten, or twenty-five years of service to the company).

Since companies have found incentives to be effective in other aspects of performance, it is logical that they would extend the use of incentives to encourage good health habits, as well. Thus, companies are using incentives to encourage employees to:

- Begin a healthy activity (free low-calorie recipe books for new enrollees in a weight-control program);
- Adopt a healthier behavior or change a negative habit (cash for stopping smoking);
- Continue a healthy lifestyle (prizes or gifts for exercising regularly or maintaining controlled blood pressure).

Another reason for offering incentives to improve or maintain good health is business's growing belief that wellness programs and incentives will help employees be more healthy and productive, and live longer, more useful lives. Until recently, corporations tended to confine their role in employee health to the provision of health insurance and medical services for employees and their families to be used at the time of illness. With increasing evidence that lifestyle plays an important part in keeping people well, just as the medical system plays an important role in treating people who are ill, the nature of employers' involvement in their employees' health has changed to include a greater emphasis on supporting and encouraging positive personal health actions.

Further, with the increasing evidence that lifestyle plays an important part in keeping people well, business leaders are recognizing that the cost of a company's health care bill ultimately will be reduced if employees practice good health habits, because they will not use their health benefits as extensively. So the money used to reward employees for stopping smoking may, in the long run, reduce the higher cost of treating lung cancer or emphysema in the future.

Providing individuals with incentives to adopt and practice routine healthy behaviors (follow a prudent diet, exercise regularly, control personal stress, wear a seatbelt, etc.) also makes good business sense because it results in employees who are more physically fit, in fewer work days lost due to personal problems, in fewer debilitating injuries from auto accidents, etc.

Incentives can serve as a reminder that the long-term consequences of our behavior are more important than short-term satisfactions. For example, a favorite dessert will taste good--now. And while the desire to wear a size ten dress seems far removed, the prospect of being recognized by the boss as a "Wellness Winner" after losing just ten pounds may provide the short-term stimulus needed to keep the long-range goal in sight. To a smoker seeking immediate satisfaction from a cigarette, the prospect of ill health due to a lifetime of smoking doesn't seem relevant. But the challenge of staying smoke free for six months in order to win a monetary prize may be enough to help a smoker say "no" to a cigarette. Adding incentives to good intentions and the knowledge of the results of poor health practices may tip the scale in favor of following a healthy lifestye. Incentives help to strengthen resolve to change behavior.

Another reason for the increasing use of incentives is simply the increase in the number of worksite health promotion programs. Incentives have played an important role in many of the successful worksite programs developed in the past ten years, and new programs frequently are patterned after those already in operation. Carefully selected and designed incentives can motivate employees and their families to get involved in new and different activities, make a program more fun and enjoyable for those who participate, and provide recognition for the personal efforts employees make to change behavior.

WHAT IS KNOWN ABOUT THE USE OF INCENTIVES?

Psychology, sociology, learning theory, organizational behavior, and related fields all have provided research findings that are relevant to the use of incentives in achieving behavior changes or in complying with recommendations about personal health. Research in the behavior modification field points out three techniques that provide some of the most valuable lessons in the use of incentives for promoting good health habits--positive reinforcement, negative consequences and restrictions, and feedback. A brief description of these techniques, along with specific exmples, provides a framework for examining various types of incentives.

- Positive reinforcement is a technique to strengthen behavior by rewarding it. Simply put, it is letting people know that the behavior they exhibit is valued and encouraged. For example, one researcher gave prizes to hypertensive school children who turned in empty packets of salt substitutes to encourage them to continue not using salt. (Elder, et al., 1985). A high blood pressure control program among hypertensive workers mobilized co-workers, family members and friends to provide support and encouragement for participants. The social reinforcement--that is, having significant people pay attention to one's health behavior--was an important key to the success of the program. (Alderman, 1980).
- Negative consequences and restrictions may influence individuals to behave in a way that will avoid negative feedback or punishment. Individuals may pay their taxes on time in order to avoid a fine; children may prepare onerous school work to be allowed to escape to "recess" or avoid a failing grade. Although it is used much less frequently than positive reinforcement, the threat of negative consequences also can influence health behaviors.

For example, the Pawtucket Heart Health Program "Weigh-In" strengthens weight loss-related behavior by encouraging participants to avoid a negative consequence - the loss of $10 which they bet on their own ability meet a 2½-pound-per-week weight loss goal. (Sennett, et al., in press).

- The feedback and shaping technique provides progress reports on behavior so that individuals know how well they are doing in moving toward their goals, and it encourages them to continue. The shaping aspect of this technique is accomplished through showing successive approximations of a target behavior until a goal is reached. For example, one project served healthy snacks to individuals who had committed themselves to change their diets. This action gave the participants an idea of how to proceed in making the changes. Small "right" steps will lead to accomplishment of a long-range goal. (Elder, et al., 1985).

A wide range of additional studies illustrate the value of incentives when used in conjunction with well designed wellness activities.

Cash as a Motivator

Of the commonly-used incentives, many program planners believe that cash may be the strongest motivator, perhaps because the recipient can use it for something that is personally meaningful, rather than accept a prize selected by someone else. Two studies shed some light on the efficacy of cash incentives. The first compared the effectiveness of three different-sized bonuses ($30, $150, and $300) in inducing weight loss in an overweight population. A direct correlation between the size of the incentive and the amount of weight loss was noted at the end of the program (Jeffrey, et al., 1976).

The second study compared the results of five procedures for treating high blood pressure (standard care, nurse counseling, home blood pressure checks, peer group meetings, and financial incentives). Payments of $4 to $16 per visit for keeping clinic appointments and achieving high blood pressure goals, plus a sweepstakes prize of $500, proved to be more effective than the non-financial alternatives (Shepard, et al., 1979).

An interesting twist on the use of cash incentives is reported in a study of a weight-loss program that used the employee's own money as the incentive. Each participant chose a personal weight goal, as well as the size of the reward for attaining that goal ($5 to $30 per pay period). Through payroll deductions, the chosen reward was withheld until the employee had reached the goal. The average weight loss was 12.2 pounds over a six-month period. The program reported a lower drop-out rate than worksite programs without financial incentives or community programs, despite the fact that only the employee's own money was used as the incentive.

On-going periodic cash bonuses may be more effective than one-time lump-sum payments, although both can be effective. In a review of fifteen smoking cessation incentive programs, periodic payments produced a success rate of 64 percent versus a 47 percent success rate for lump-sum payments. The difference was not statistically significant, but was consistent with the observations in the psychology literature that repeated reinforcement is effective in sustaining changes in behavior (Warner and Murt, 1984).

Positive Incentives

Appropriate, positive incentives seem to encourage specific actions; additional pay, more vacation days, and recognition for performance have effectively motivated individuals to lose weight, use seatbelts, exercise regularly, and practice other good health routines.

In one study of incentives to discourage smoking, any employee who did not smoke on the job received a $7 per week bonus. Within a month of the program's initiation, the percentage of employees smoking on the job fell from 67 percent to 43 percent. While results gathered after only one month do not attest to the success of the cessation program, they do illustrate the value of using incentives to help individuals initiate a new health habit (Warner and Murt, 1984).

In the same report, examples of the use of positive incentives for a group of employees, rather than for individuals, also are cited. In one company, employees were encouraged to sign pledge cards in which they promised to wear seatbelts for a year. Actual usage was monitored and, if the group met a pre-specified goal, a sweepstakes was held, with the winners drawn from among the pledge signers. Seatbelt usage increased from 45 percent prior to the introduction of the program to 70 percent over a period of six weeks, exceeding the goal of 60 percent.

After prizes were awarded (a weekend in the city, use of a company car for a week, and fifteen watches), a second sweepstakes was initiated. The goal was 75 percent usage with a ten-day vacation in Hawaii as the prize. Eighty-five percent of the employees signed pledge cards and 82 percent of the signers used seatbelts in the twelve-week study. Although both studies have some design flaws, they clearly indicate the effectiveness of positive incentives in influencing large numbers of employees to adopt a new health behavior (Warner and Mart, 1984).

Negative Incentives

Reward for good performance usually is a stronger motivator than punishment for non-performance, or poor performance, and negative incentives frequently stimulate self-protective or defensive behavior that is counterproductive. However, in recent years, some fire and police departments have begun to refuse to employ smokers or to continue the employment of individuals who do not maintain specified levels of physical fitness (Warner and Murt, 1984). Some companies also require that cash incentives be paid back "with interest" if the employee reverts to his old, poor health habit. At Bonne Bell, Lakewood, OH, smokers receive $250 if they quit for a year; if they start smoking again, they are asked to donate $500 to the company Foundation, which gives it to a community group committed to anti-smoking efforts.

Social Support

The social support provided through group activity or through competition is a powerful incentive. Brownell studied three worksite weight-loss incentive competitions and reported these findings (Brownell, et al., 1984).

- The drop-out rates were less than one percent and the mean weight losses were approximately twelve pounds--both indications of successful programs.
- Managers and employees gave favorable ratings to the programs and recommended the programs for other business settings.
- The competitions were cost-effective. The increased motivation provided by the social setting and the spirit of competition appeared to reduce the need for more expensive incentives and more extensive educational efforts.

Location, Convenience, and Cost as Incentives

Companies are interested in helping employees make long-term health changes, no matter how difficult they are. Managers in many corporations are persuaded that healthy employees are more productive employees and these managers are, therefore, willing to make a commitment to worksite wellness programs. Individuals who have been involved with wellness programs have concluded that the provision of these programs on-site, at convenient times and at inexpensive rates for participants, is a powerful incentive, in and of itself.

For example, some physical fitness and exercise programs have shown impressive results in enhanced morale, lowered absenteeism, and reduced disability largely, the authors believe, because they are on-site, convenient, and inexpensive.

- One company reports a significant correlation between job performance ratings and participation in the on-site exercise programs sponsored by the company (Bernacki and Burns, 1984).
- A Canadian insurance company furnished exercise facilities at the worksite and the absenteeism fell to 22 percent below normal for the six-month measurement period after inception of the program (Shepard and Covey, 1981).

WHAT TYPES OF INCENTIVES ARE BUSINESSES OFFERING?

Incentives do not fall easily into distinct categories. The same incentive might be used for different purposes (a bonus might be given to beginners in an exercise class and to graduates of a stress-management program); different incentives might be applied to the same type of program (public recognition for those who exercise regularly or a gift of an exercise suit for runners who achieve 1,000 miles in a year); and more than one incentive may be used in the same program (nutrition handbooks for everyone who joins a weight-control program and gift certificates to the team that most closely meets its weight-loss goal).

Incentives to encourage healthy lifestyles in businesses can be categoriezed in the following ways:

- Corporate policies and practices
- Facilities and equipment
- Personal recognition
- Tangible rewards
- Teams/competitions
- Health care benefits

A brief discussion of each category follows, along with examples of companies offering incentives in each category.

Corporate Policies and Practices

A company's visible commitment to worksite health promotion, as shown through its policies and practices, is a popular incentive. Bringing programs to the worksite, scheduling activities conveniently, granting paid time to participate in health promotion classes, and making programs available to families are among the most frequently used policies and practices.

- Sentry Insurance World Headquarters (Stevens Point, WI) built a fitness center for employees and their families. To help assure that employees have ample opportunity to use the facility, Sentry schedules flexible working hours and provides exercise clothes without charge. Having exercise clothes available (laundering is free, too) allows for a spontaneous decision to work out.*
- A much smaller company, Newman Computer Exchange of Ann Arbor, MI, with sixty employees, offers aerobics classes onsite immediately after work at no cost to participants.
- The Wellness Center at Adolph Coors (Golden, CO) is open special hours for night shift workers.

Facilities and Equipment

Although most health promotion programs operate effectively without special facilities and equipment, the presence of an exercise or recreation center dedicated for the use of employees and their families can be an important motivator. The availability of other much less expensive facilities and equipment, such as showers, bicycle racks, jump ropes, refrigerators, and audio cassettes with relaxation tapes may be equally effective in encouraging healthy lifestyles.

- A gymnasium, conditioning equipment, weight training machines, racquetball courts, an indoor golf driving range, and a swimming pool are part of the fitness facility offered to Sentry Insurance Company employees and families (Stevens Point, WI).
- Adolph Coors (Golden, CO) provides its employees with a 23,000 square-foot Wellness Center with exercise space, equipment, and facilities for health education classes.

[*Additional details about all programs discussed can be found in this paper's section, "Company Examples."]

- L.L. Bean (Freeport, ME), whose business is recreation, encourages outdoor exercise activities for employees and their families. The company loans camping equipment, canoes, tents, and recreational gear to its employees without charge. Five lakeside cabins are available to employees and their families year-round.

Personal Recognition

The praise of others and the good feelings that result from public acknowledgement of one's efforts and accomplishments are strong motivators. Several programs have capitalized on employees' good response to positive recognition with the development of incentives.

- Every two weeks a different "Wellness Winner" gets his or her picture displayed in Kimberly-Clark's lobby (Neenah, WI), along with a write-up about the health-promoting accomplishment that is being recognized. Goals that are rewarded may range from reaching a specific weight loss target to running 800 miles in one year.
- The number of miles run by Levi-Strauss employees is posted for others to see (San Francisco, CA).

Employees also like to be recognized as taking part in programs that are perceived as being upbeat and fun. And the titles of successful worksite wellness programs, along with the mottos and logos used on their t-shirts and other give-aways, indicate that people choose to identify with programs that sound enjoyable and positive. Some examples are:

Fannie Mae Gets Physical (Fannie Mae, Washington, DC)
Take Charge (Xerox, Webster, NY)
Ton of Fat (a weight-loss challenge between two plants of Weyerhauser, Tacoma, WA)
Buns on the Run (Safeway Bakery, Clackamas, OR)

Living is a Cinch (a seat-belt program of the American Hospital Association, Chicago, IL)

The Good Health Plan (Westlake Community Hospital, Melrose Park, IL)

Reach Out for Health (Southern New England Telephone, New Haven, CT).

Tangible Rewards

By far the most frequently used incentives are the tangible rewards. They may be gift certificates, merchanidse (with t-shirts being among the most popular), rebates on fees, cash, trips, discounts, and many others. Here are some corporate examples of other tangible rewards.

- The chairman of Intermatic, Inc. (Spring Grove, IL) asked employees who smoked to "bet our money--not your life." Those who gave up smoking and did not smoke for one year were eligible for a lottery. The grand prize was a trip for two to Las Vegas with two nights' lodging and $200 expense money. Others who quit, but didn't win the Las Vegas trip, got a day at the local horse races.
- Ten hours in an aerobics class sponsored by HNG-Internorth (Omaha, NB) entitled employees to a gift certificate at a local sporting goods store.
- At Xerox (Webster, NY), employees are urged to enter a TRY-Athlon, a fitness/recreation activity emphasizing trying new activities. The first 400 entrants receive a Xerox reflector headband and become eligible to receive prizes including exercise clothes, cassette player, golf clubs, camera or bicycle.

Companies--large and small--use cash or extra pay as a motivator.

- Healthy Utah (Salt Lake City, UT) pays cash for lasting behavior change. Smokers who quit receive $25 at the end of three smoke-free months, another $25 after six months, and $50 at the end of a year of not smoking.

- At Newman Computer Exchange (Ann Arbor, MI), employees receive cash for unused sick leave.
- One of the pioneers of "well pay," Scherer Brothers Lumber Company (Minneapolis, MN), gives a two-hour pay bonus to union employees for each month in which the employee is neither late nor absent from work.
- Schwartz Meat Company (Norman, OK) - a small company (25 employees) that gives big incentives - rewards employees who exercise regularly with up to two weeks of extra pay each year. An employee who exercises four times a week and earns thirty "aerobic points" is paid one-half week's additional pay every quarter. Spouses and children can earn extra pay, too. Spouses have the same rules as employees and the same reward; children can earn half that amount.
- Weekly paychecks at Speedcall Corporation (Hayward, CA) include an extra $7.00 for those employees who do not smoke at work. And backsliders who light up one week and lose their reward are encouraged to get back quickly to not smoking. So the next week without smoking earns the $7.00 bonus.
- Westlake Community Hospital (Melrose Park, IL) pays employees a $50 bounty for participating in an annual health appraisal. At the time of the appraisal, they can qualify for additional good health bonuses: $25 for normal blood pressure; $25 for weight within normal limits for height; $25 for not smoking; $25 for regular seatbelt use.
- Runners, walkers, cyclists, swimmers and racquetball players of the Hospital Corporation of America (Nashville, TN) earn aerobic points when they exercise. Every six months they report their points and exchange points for cash at 24¢ per point.

Teams/Competitions

Some incentives reinforce the social support of group activity and the positive social pressure that results from cooperating with others to achieve a goal. Both are powerful. Making a commitment to others, as well as receiving help from others to reach a goal, can assist an employee in sticking to a diet, or wearing a seatbelt, or following safe procedures.

- Employees from branches of Bankers First (Augusta, GA) formed competitive teams in a weight-loss program. Each team member paid $5 for a ten-week program and were reimbursed $1 per pound for losses. Winning teams received jogging suits, new clothes, and t-shirts.
- A weight-loss program conducted by Laser Craft (Santa Rosa, CA) used a similar technique. Four-person teams weighed in monthly and the winning team received gift certificates to a local athletic store. Eighty participants (nearly half of Laser Craft's workforce) lost 300 pounds.
- The safety personnel at a DuPont plant in Waynesboro, VA, were concerned about how few employees wore seat belts regularly. The program they established offered a gift to every employee if twice-per-week audits showed ninety percent usage for two months. Seatbelt usage was monitored and every tenth car entering the plant in which passengers used seatbelts received a "reward" - cheese and crackers or other snacks - as a reminder of the campaign. After two months the plant had met its goal and every employee got to choose a gift from a special catalog. Gifts had an average value of $16.
- Scherer Brothers Lumber Company (Minneapolis, MN) is concerned about job safety. To prove it, they offer bonuses of up to $300 per employee if all employees work together to reduce accidents in the shop. The bonuses are earned three ways: $100 to every union employee if there are no injuries during the year that result in lost time, $100 if

there are no injuries requiring more than first aid treatment, and $100 if the company has a better safety record than in the previous year.

Health Care Benefits

Attempts are being made to link good health behavior, incentive programs, and health care insurance coverage. But it has been difficult to create health care plans that reward healthy behaviors while still providing benefits for those who need them. A few employers have initiated incentives that may do both.

- The City of Bellevue, WA, provides a new comprehensive insurance program that shares any savings (the difference between the projected cost of the insurance plan and actual use) with employees. Each employee has an incentive account that earns one point for every dollar of premium paid on the employee's behalf, up to $840 for a single employee. Employees also may earn bonus points for good health practices: 100 bonus points each year for not smoking, 100 points for heart rate recovery after exercise within normal limits for a healthy person, 100 points for appropriate body fat content, and twenty-five points for each quarter year in which the employee does not use sick leave. Points are subtracted from the account for every dollar paid in claims on the employee's behalf. Points remaining at the end of the year determine the employee's share of the unused monies--the more points, the greater the share. Following good health practices can increase an employee's account and, therefore, increase his/her share of the savings.
- The Providence Medical Center (Seattle, WA) offers a similar plan with employees earning extra points--and an extra share in the savings pool--for a good heart rate after exercise, good flexibility, no smoking, appropriate height-to-weight ratio, and blood pressure within normal limits.

- The Adolph Coors (Golden, CO) insurance program for employees includes a co-payment feature. The employee pays fifteen percent of health care costs and the insurance program pays the remaining eighty-five percent. However, if an employee demonstrates a willingness to follow a healthy lifestyle, the co-payment is reduced to ten percent for the employee and the insurance program covers the remaining ninety percent of the health care claims cost.
- Westlake Community Hospital (Melrose Park, IL) ties good health practices to its medical insurance plan in two ways. First, if an employee keeps blood pressure and weight within normal limits and does not smoke, $150 of the medical plan deductible is waived, should the employee need to make an insurance claim. (The Westlake plan calls for a $150 to $250 deductible.) Second, if an employee is injured in an automobile accident and was wearing a seatbelt at the time, all emergency care is paid by the insurance plan (no deductible, no co-payment).

WHAT HAS BEEN LEARNED ABOUT OFFERING EFFECTIVE WORKSITE WELLNESS INCENTIVES?

The experiences of health promotion program staff members provide guidance in developing and planning incentive packages and avoiding the few problems that incentives can cause. Some of the lessons learned from worksite health programs are described in the following suggestions.

Incentive programs have the greatest impact when they include rewards for employees who are already healthy, as well as for those employees who wish to make changes in their health practice patterns. Any reward system must establish rules that are perceived as fair. An incentive program that excludes those who are already practicing good health habits may create animosity. Those who have never smoked, for example, may be resentful of a campaign to encourage non-smoking if the rewards are desirable but available only to those who quit smoking. Some companies get around this by rewarding nonsmokers as well as recent quitters. (Speedcall Corporatiaon, Hayward, CA; Flexcon Company, Spencer, MA; Sentry Insurance Company, Stevens Point, WI).

The health promotion activity to which the incentive applies must be viewed positively by participants. No incentives are effective if the activity, program, or incentives are not personally valued by the participants. A program that is viewed as amateurish, an activity that does not relate to an identifiable health behavior, or an incentive that is seen as silly will not work. The incentives to join a weight-loss program, for example, will be more effective if the program itself is based on well publicized weight-loss principles, such as an emphasis on changing long-term eating patterns rather than quick losses or fad diets,

reasonable and personal weight-loss goals for enrollees, and nutrition and weight-control education instead of blind adherence to a regimen.

Incentives are not effective if they are viewed as coercive or manipulative. Incorporation of personal health practices as a criterion for promotion may be coercive. An excessively high cash award for behavior change may be seen as manipulative.

Small, visible, quickly earned rewards seem to encourage people to take the first steps in health promotion and can be used effectively to increase participation in health promotion programs. A t-shirt from the American Hospital Association (Chicago, IL) for employees who participated in a blood-pressure screening and, coffee mugs for joining the fitness program at Southern New England Telephone Company (New Haven, CT) are examples of inexpensive, small rewards for taking the first step.

Lotteries seem to work best in programs that already have good participation but need to encourage maintenance of a regimen. The possibility of winning a prize seems to help people keep going on routines they have established. In health promotion programs that have been in operation for several years, one of the problems is maintaining momentum and discouraging backsliding. An occasional big prize (an extra week's vacation, $300 in cash or a gift certificate, exercise equipment) may help support those who exercise regularly in their attempts to maintain their activities.

The most effective incentive programs support family participation. Changing health habits and incorporating new habits into a life pattern can be accomplished more easily if there is support from family members. Schwartz Meat Company (Norman, OK) encourages families to build exercise into their lives by allowing employees, spouses and children to earn extra salary through demonstration of regular aerobic exercise. L.L.

Bean (Freeport, ME) provides recreational equipment and facilities for employees and their families. Both are good examples of incentives that influence employees and their families.

It is easier to select appropriate incentives in companies that have established philosophies about their health promotion activites. The incentives also should be compatible with program design.

- A program that is designed to encourage long-term behavior change and concentrates its efforts on those who most need to change will offer rewards for evidence that change has occurred. Cash awards after weight loss or smoking cessation suits such a program (Bankers First, Augusta, GA; Bonne Bell, Lakewood, OH; Healthy Utah, Salt Lake City, UT).
- Other companies support good health practices wherever they occur and rewards are not restricted to enrollees of formal programs offered at the worksite or tied to the use of a facility. Hospital Corporation of America (Nashville, TN), for example, rewards its employees for their aerobic activities (running, walking, cycling, swimming, and racquetball) no matter where the employees choose to exercise.
- Many program designers believe that it is important for participants to make a commitment to the program in which they enroll. Often this is accomplished by charging a fee. For such programs, a rebate incentive is complementary to the program design. Southern New England Telephone Company (New Haven, CT) charges employees from $10 to $30 for its health education courses. The reimbursement for successfully completing one course is a gift certificate that can cover the fees for subsequent courses.

- If a program's overall design and philosophy aim to help employees sustain good health behaviors over a long period of time, periodic incentives are very effective. Healthy Utah's smoking cessation awards are given at the end of three, six, and twelve months of smoking cessation. Westlake Community Hospital, Melrose Park, IL; the City of Bellevue, Bellevue, WA; and Intermatic, Inc., Spring Grove, IL, have established annual incentives.

COMPANY EXAMPLES--WORKSITE WELLNESS INCENTIVES

Following are examples of ways in which businesses are using incentives to encourage employees to stay well. Many of these summaries highlight selected parts of the companies' efforts and do not reflect the full scope of their health-promotion/wellness programming.

American Hospital Association, Chicago, IL
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The American Hospital Association (AHA) believes in using small but visible incentives to promote good health habits among employees. Here are some examples.

- As a reward for participating in a weight-control program, pictures of "losers" were posted in the cafeteria and announcements noted in the Association's newsletter.
- To encourage participation in a blood pressure screening program, t-shirts with the motto "High Blood Pressure: Check It Out" were distributed.
- Parents who attended an educational program on child safety restraints received a raffle ticket for a child safety restraint.
- To encourage seatbelt use, road maps, key rings, and pens and paper pads with the motto "Living is a Cinch" were given to passengers entering the company garage wearing seatbelts. Belt usage rose from 30 percent to 80 percent during the campaign. But it should be noted that Illinois enacted a mandatory seatbelt law during the campaign.

Adolph Coors Company, Golden, CO
Mark Wright
(303)277-5805

Traditionally, Coors has encouraged employees to stay physically fit by sponsoring an extensive recreation program. The company provides 60 percent of the financial support (facility rental charges, officials' fees and playing equipment) for team games and 60 percent of individual sports charges such as greens fees, ski lift tickets, trap and pistol shooting fees. The success of the program is reflected in the number of employees who participate. In 1984, Coors supported 33 volleyball, 23 basketball, 93 softball, and 100 bowling teams. Another 950 employees joined the ski club and 100 participated in golf.

The primary incentive for wellness is the provision of a physical facility free to employees.

Realizing that as employees become healthier, health care claims should decrease, benefiting both employees and the company, Coors established another incentive for wellness through its insurance package. Employees can reduce their insurance co-payments from 15 percent to 10 percent by demonstrating a willingness to pursue a healthy lifestyle. Here's how.

All employees and their spouses may particiapte in a health risk appraisal that helps them to determine which of their health habits might result in poor health and what each person can do to reduce personal health risks. The health risk appraisal used by Coors computes a "health age" that may be older or younger than the chronological age of the employee, depending on his/her state of health. If the difference between chronological age and health age is less than two years (indicating that the employee is in an average or better state of health for his/her age and sex), Coors immediately reduces the employee's co-payment for insurance to 10 percent. If the difference is greater than two years, indicating that the employee has a greater than average risk of poor health, a wellness counselor is available to assist the employee or spouse to plan a healthier lifestyle. If the employee accepts the counseling, the co-payment is reduced to 10 percent. After two years, the co-payment may remain at 10 percent if the employee has reduced the difference between the health and chronological age by half.

Bankers First, Augusta, GA
Jim Gray or Sally Rumor
(404)823-3200

Incentives combined with some form of competition seemed to be particularly effective at Bankers First. Employees interested in a weight-loss program formed teams to compete among branch offices to see which teams could lose the most weight. Each team member paid $5 for a ten-week course in safe and permanent weight loss and nutrition. For each pound lost during that time (up to 24 pounds), the employee received $1.00. Members of winning teams received jogging suits, new clothing, and t-shirts. Any employee who met his/her goal received a three-month membership in a local health club. The individual who lost the most weight received a gift certificate and all "graduates" received coffee mugs and t-shirts. The friendly spirit of competition helped many of the participants to stay on the program when they were tempted to overeat.

Bonne Bell, Lakewood, OH
Connie Schafer
(216)221-0800

Bonne Bell promotes good health among its employees and makes a major commitment to consumer health awareness as well. The company has some unusual and effective incentives for its

employees. Employees may take an extra 30 minutes at lunch time if they wish to exercise. Discounts are provided for sports equipment such as running suits, shoes, and bicycles. And employees have permission to wear exercise clothes at work following an afternoon workout.

To encourage physical exercise during inclement winter weather, runners are paid $.50 per mile during January, February, and March; walkers are paid $.25 per mile. Runners must complete 10 miles each week to qualify.

Other incentives are offered for those who are trying to drop some bad habits. If smokers quit for six months, there is a $250 bounty. If they begin again, they are asked to give $500 to the corporate charitable foundation, which donates it to a community group supporting nonsmoking efforts.

If an overweight employee loses at least 10 pounds, he/she will receive $5 per pound over a six-month period. To discourage too great a weight loss, rewards are not offered for more than 50 pounds. For every pound gained back, the employee is asked to pay $10 to the corporate charitable foundation.

City of Bellevue, Bellevue, WA
Howard Strickler
(206)455-6838

The City of Bellevue is one of a small group of employers to link good health behavior, insurance benefits, and health care cost containment. The City is self-insured for health benefits, a strategy designed to reduce costs. Based on previous experience, City management determines how much money it anticipates will be needed to pay all the insurance claims for their employees for a year. If claims are less than estimated, the City saves money and the savings are shared with employees. Employees who work hard to stay healthy receive a larger share of the savings than those who do not. Here's how it works.

The cost of health care currently is around $70 per month for a single employee. Each month the City allocates $70 to the health care plan for each single employee and 70 points to that employee's Health Aware Incentive Plan Account. In addition to the points allocated each month, employees can earn extra points through good health habits. They can earn 100 points for aerobic conditioning (measured by heart rate recovery after exercise), 100 points for being within limits for body fat, 100 points for not smoking, and 25 points for each quarter in which no sick leave is used.

If an employee files a health care claim during the year, one point is deducted from his account for each dollar spent on the claim (after deductibles and co-insurance have been eliminated). At the end of the year, an employee will have a positive balance

if all points have not been "spent," or a zero balance if the dollars spent on claims exceeded the points in the account. (The account never goes below zero regardless of the amount of health care claims filed by an employee during the year.) After all claims and expenses are paid at the end of the year, the city will share 50 percent of the savings with employees. The number of points that an employee has accumulated determines his percentage of the savings. (While this report cites data for a single employee, the health care plan also provides for family coverage and for family incentives.)

Some examples show how health behavior can pay off. Three single employees, Dan, Betty, and Terry, start off with the same number of points.

- Dan earns 70 points per month for 840 per year but earns no extra points for a healthy lifestyle. During the year he files a $240 claim for benefits and his account is reduced by 240 points to a total of 600.
- Betty also has 840 points for the year but she has a major illness requiring hospitalization and a resulting bill of $8,300. Her account is reduced to zero.
- Terry adds to his 840 points by not smoking (100 points), exercising regularly which results in a good heart rate recovery (100 points), and appropriate body fat level (100 points). For two quarters of the year, he does not use any sick leave (50 points). Terry's total is 1,190.

When the savings are divided, Betty will not receive a bonus because she has received payment for a health claim and Terry will receive a bonus approximately twice as large as Dan because he has nearly twice as many points in his Health Aware Incentive Plan Account. The size of the bonus is determined by the amount saved and that varies each year. So clearly, staying healthy pays dividends.

The City recognizes that in some years, despite the efforts of some employees, there may be no savings to share. A $5,000 bonus fund is available to reward those employees who have had positive experience even though the overall experience was negative.

Comsat, Washington, D.C.
Michelle Craig
(202)863-6700

Comsat has recently opened its Fitness Center at its L'Enfant Plaza and Clarksburg sites. Comsat's management encourages employee participation in these programs by its support, and a strong health promotion campaign. Additional incentives include a low membership fee based on salary range and a free stress test. The Center also sponsors special events such as a "Bike Across Maryland" and fun runs to maintain participation.

Comsat's programs include exercise classes, weight-loss and other educational seminars as well as lots of personal contact and guidance by fitness professionals.

DuPont, Waynesboro, VA
James W. Pruett, Safety Director
(703)949-2000 Ext. 2351

Efforts to reduce the number of lost work days due to non-work automobile accidents resulted in a seatbelt safety program at this DuPont plant. A committee of hourly workers who were asked to study the problem recommended an audit of incoming traffic two days each week to determine the percent of workers using seatbelts. To make the effort visible to employees, every tenth car in which passengers were wearing seatbelts received a "reward" - cheese and crackers and other snacks. At the time of the first audit, 25 percent of the employees wore seatbelts regularly.

The incentive that was established to improve seatbelt usage was tied to the performance of the total plant. If no employee was involved in a non-work automobile accident that resulted in lost work time for two months, each employee received a Board of Directors Award - a catalogue of gifts with an average value of $16. Included in the catalogue were household items, garden supplies, tools, personal items such as hairdryers. During the period studied, all employees won a gift because seatbelt usage rose to 90 percent.

Later, the employee committee recommended more difficult rules: the audit was conducted three times each week on both incoming and outgoing traffic and three months of over 90 percent seatbelt usage was required. The employees won again.

Now the plant is auditing traffic (and providing the food prizes to every tenth car), but no longer needs to provide the incentive gifts. The average seatbelt usage in 1985 remained at 88 percent. The traffic audit and snack prizes demonstrate the continued concern of management and helps to reinforce the employees' new seatbelt habits.

Results:

Three-year period before seatbelt campaign:
- 25 percent of the employees used seatbelts regularly
- 14 non-work injuries due to auto accidents
- 394 work days lost

Three-year period after the start of the campaign:
- 88 percent wear seatbelts without incentive program
- 90 percent wore seatbelts during incentive program
- 7 non-work injuries due to auto accidents
- 51 work days lost

In 1984 - just one accident and one day lost.

Fannie Mae, Washington, D.C.
Janet L. Salinas
(202)537-6643

To bolster interest in fitness classes, Fannie Mae (also known as Federal National Mortgage Association) offered all enrollees a t-shirt with the exercise program's theme--Fannie Mae Gets Physical. The clever theme made the shirts--and the class--very popular.

Fannie Mae provides additional incentives to keep employees exercising. If an employee attends 80 percent of the exercise sessions, he/she can be reimbursed for 100 percent of the class fee of $30. About 50 percent of the employees who sign up qualify for the rebate.

In a similar program, smokers who quit and do not smoke for three months will be repaid 50 percent of the fee charged to enter the program.

Flexcon Company, Spencer, MA
Bob Quentin, Data Processing Manager
(617)885-3973

Flexcon uses gifts to encourage their employees to reduce or quit smoking. Every third Thursday, quitters and non-smokers receive a gift certificate. A similar gift certificate also goes to those who reduce smoking. An important aspect of this program is that those with good health habits (the non-smokers) are rewarded at the same time that smokers are being encouraged to adopt healthier behaviors.

Flexcon has 398 employees--214 non-smokers and 184 smokers. In a six-month period in 1984, 42 employees quit smoking and 17 cut down. The company has given out $24,000 in gift certificates.

Healthy Utah, State Department of Health, Salt Lake City, UT
Denise Basse
(801)533-6120

Healthy Utah offers a health promotion program to members of the Public Employees Health Plan. The program has some built-in incentives to help people get started on health changes and some add-on incentives to help them maintain the changes. As part of the plan, members can receive a physical fitness and health lifestyle assessment and interpretation of the results, which gives employees information to determine if lifestyle changes need to be made to assure good health in the future.

If employees choose to alter health behaviors, they can earn bonuses. For example:

- If employees enter a smoking cessation program and remain smoke free for three months, they receive a $25 bonus. After six months of not smoking, Healthy Utah adds a second bonus of $25, with a final bonus of $50 at the end of a smoke-free year.
- For employees who need to lose weight, a $30 reward is offered for losing the first 10 pounds, with $30 more for each additional 10 pounds.
- Rebates on exercise class fees and t-shirts are the rewards for regular exercisers.

HNG-Internorth, Omaha, NB
Ruth Byers
(402)633-4000

To encourage its employees to stop smoking and to maintain non-smoking status over time, HNG-Internorth offers a series of rewards at crucial times. Education and self-help encourage employees to stop smoking. After three months of not smoking, participants receive a laser engraved pencil holder and a cloissone "I Quit" pin - rewards that are intended to be reminders of the decision not to smoke and the company's support. After one year of not smoking, the employee receives a more substantial gift as a token recognition of the substantial effort made to stay a non-smoker.

Occasionally, one-time promotional incentives are used. For example, for a one-month aerobic exercise promotion, those who signed up and completed 10 hours of aerobic exercise received a gift certificate to a local sporting goods store. The company often gives small recognition gifts for milestones in exercise, such as t-shirts to all employees who participate in the annual Corporate Cup run, and others.

Most health-promotion programs offered by HNG-InterNorth take place before or after normal working hours, but there are exceptions. A recent intensive education program for diabetics was held on company time as an added incentive to attend. Stress management programs may also be offered on company time. Finally, beverages and door prizes are provided to supplement employee's brownbag lunches and encourage attendance at noon-hour health classes and seminars.

Hospital Corporation of America, Nashville, TN
Debby Meredith
(615)327-9551 Ext. 2084

At the Hosital Corporation of America (HCA), it pays to exercise. Runners, walkers, cyclists, swimmers, aerobics class members and racquetball players earn points for units of exercise: every one-quarter mile of swimming, one mile of running or walking, thirty minutes of racquetball, four miles of cycling, and fifteen

minutes of exercise in an approved aerobics program equals one unit. Every six months, the units can be converted to cash at $.24 per unit. Regular exercisers also receive t-shirts, locker space, and sports bags.

Intermatic, Inc., Spring Grove, IL
Mary Kay Rundblad, RN
(815)675-2321

For the past three years, Intermatic has run a fitness program with incentives. Aerobic points are earned and accumulated for six months. In the first year, points could be used for t-shirts, sports jackets, exercise shoes. In the second year, they received t-shirts and golf caps.

The Chairman of Intermatic asked employees who smoked to "bet our money--not your life." Those who gave up smoking for one year were eligible for a lottery. The grand prize was a trip for two to Las Vegas, with two nights lodging and $200 expense money. Others who quit but didn't win the Las Vegas trip got a day at the local horse races--admission tickets for two and a free $2.00 betting ticket. In addition, employees could bet up to $100 on themselves at the beginning of the program. If they were able to quit smoking, they got money back. If they didn't succeed, the money was donated to the American Cancer Society or the Heart Association. Anyone who had not smoked in one year was eligible for the lottery, so non-smokers could particiapte, too.

Intermatic also has "birthday fitness awards." A $25 check is available on the employee's birthday. When picking up the check in the medical department, employees get their blood pressures checked, glucose levels screened, weight, hearing, and vision tested--and a friendly reminder to get a regular checkup for good health.

L. L. Bean, Freeport, ME
Nonie Bullock
(207)865-4761

Recreation is a way of life for Bean employees and the company has geared its incentives for good health to that life. A 90-acre tract provides an inducement for employees to exercise regularly. Trained personnel offer a wide range of lifestyle programs and clinics.

The most innovative incentives for good health are through the recreational program. Canoes, tents, sleeping bags, and camping and recreational gear for outdoor sports are loaned free of charge to employees and their families. The company owns five cabins on a lake which are available year round to employees on a

lottery basis (and small weekly fee). The company also subsidizes travel and lodging expenses for groups interested in entering marathons, ski races, and other competitive activities.

Bean employees who wish to lose weight receive a subsidy for fees in a local program. Members of the runners club who log 200 miles receive t-shirts (long-sleeved because it is Maine!), and those logging 500 miles receive a pair of running shorts.

If employees attend 90 percent of the 10-week aerobics classes, they receive a 50 percent rebate of the $24 fee and an award certificate. Smokers who want to quit pay $26 to enroll in a cessation program and get $13 back after three months of being smoke free.

Laser Craft, Santa Rosa, CA
Carolyn Silvestri
(707)528-1060

Laser Craft's weight-control program uses a low-cost but effective incentive for participants--gift certificates for the winners. The weight-loss program begins with information about the health consequences of overweight and safe weight-loss procedures. Employees form four-person teams and weigh in every month. The individual who loses the most weight, as well as the winning team, receive gift certificates from a local athletic store.

Can such a low-cost incentive be effective? Of the 168 employees in the company, 80 have participated in the program with a total weight loss of 300 pounds.

Levi-Strauss, San Francisco, CA
Mark Wieser
(415)544-1509

Levi-Strauss believes in giving visible rewards for exercise. Runners report the number of miles run and their names are posted in the fitness center for all to see. Certificates, redeemable for prizes such as t-shirts, a free fitness evaluation, and towels, are awarded for achieving self-established fitness goals.

To increase participation among new employees, Levi established three levels of "medals." Those who exercise three times a week receive a bronze medal; for four times a week, a silver medal; and six times a week, a gold medal.

Newman Computer Exchange, Ann Arbor, MI
James Sauter
(313)994-3200

Newman employees know that they don't have to get sick to benefit from the company's sick leave policy, as is the case in most companies. At Newman, employees are eligible for two weeks' sick leave each year, but if they do not use it, they can receive the equivalent in cash. That is a nice reward for staying healthy.

This small company of 60 employees has other incentives that encourage good health--Newman pays the full cost of smoking cessation programs for employees, and aerobics classes are offered on site, after work, at no cost to employees.

Providence Medical Center, Seattle, WA
Barry Stern
(206)326-5653

Providence recently developed a preferred provider arrangement, called the Providence Plan, as one of its strategies to contain the health care costs of its employees. Naturally, the Medical Center wants its employees to join the Plan, which emphasizes preventive services. The Plan also has the same shared savings feature as described for the City of Bellevue. (Employees earn points based on the amount of money contributed by the company for each employee's health insurance; points are deducted for claims made. Points remaining at the end of the year determine each employee's share of unused monies in the insurance plan.) They developed the following wellness incentives to encourage participation in the Plan and to increase the rewards from Plan savings for those employees who live healthy lives.

Since employees in the plan share in the pool of savings that occur from lower than anticipated use of the Plan, Providence offered an opportunity to increase one's share of the savings through good health practices. Good ratings on five tests earn points: exercise heart rate (step test), resting pulse and recovery pulse rates, flexibility, no smoking, appropriate height/weight ratio, and blood pressure within normal limits. Up to five points can be attained for each of these tests.

Anyone who subscribes to the Providence Plan receives a half-price membership in the in-house fitness facility and a free fitness evaluation. These inducements to exercise according to one's current level of fitness lead to programs of regular exercise, which lead to good scores on the tests described above. And the end result is a greater savings in health care costs for both the employer and employee.

Scherer Brothers Lumber Company, Minneapolis, MN
Bob Peters
(612)379-9633

Scherer Brothers was one of the pioneers of "well pay"--rewarding employees for staying well and coming to work daily. Any union employee not absent or late for work for one month receives two hours' extra pay. Office workers who do not use any sick leave during the year get a $250 bonus.

Another creative incentive was established to promote awareness of personal safety. Each employee in the shop (not office) can receive three $100 bonuses each year: $100 if no time has been lost from the job due to a work-related injury, $100 if no injury required more than first aid, and $100 if the company has a better safety record during the year than the previous year.

Noontime meals are complimentary for the office staff of about 50 people. The cafeteria has installed a salad bar along with nutritious hot lunches and has removed salt, butter, sugar, processed luncheon meats, high-fat foods, and caffeinated coffee.

Schwartz Meat Company, Norman, OK
Dan Schill
(405)321-6529

This small company (15 to 20 employees) gives big incentives. If employees exercise regularly throughout the year, they may receive an extra two weeks of salary for their efforts. Various exercises are converted to aerobic points, and employees must exercise four times a week and earn a minimum of 30 aerobic points to be eligible for the reward. In order to give the reward near the time it is earned, and thereby reinforce the desired behavior, exercisers are paid a half week's pay every quarter in which they exercise regularly. Spouses also can earn two weeks' salary; children can earn half that amount.

Overweight employees are encouraged to reduce through individually tailored programs. If they lose at least 10 pounds, they receive cash awards related to the difficulty of the loss. More money is given for the last pounds lost than for the first. The assumption is that the last 10 pounds are the hardest to lose.

To encourage smokers to quit, Schwartz gives $500 to those who have quit and not smoked for at least six months. The program has been expanded to encourage snuff users to quit.

Sentry Insurance, Stevens Point, WI
Ron Cook, Ph.D.
(715)346-6000

Sentry offers a variety of incentives to their employees at World Headquarters in Wisconsin, but the most visible is the fitness facility. Use of the facility and exercise equipment is free to employees and their families. Singles are not forgotten; they may bring a friend. For those who exercise at the facility, exercise uniforms are provided, as is free laundry service. The provision of exercise clothes encourages spontaneous use of the facility. The use of flex-time schedules also helps employees to find the time to exercise during the day.

To help employees who paritcipate in a fitness program to continue in the program, Sentry offers rewards at various milestones. Runners receive recognition certificates after 50 miles; a t-shirt after 100 miles; a paperweight after 500 miles. Those who have accomplished 1,000 miles of running have their names posted prominently on a chart in the fitness center--and names are posted for all subsequent 1,000 miles. The same recognition system is in effect for swimmers at check points of 20, 40, 80, etc., kilometers.

Participants in the annual Great American Smokeout get a chance in a drawing for prizes. Non-smokers can sponsor a smoker who wants to quit and, therefore, be eligible for the drawing. Including those with good health habits (non-smokers) in the program not only rewards their behavior but also allows the non-smokers to give moral support to those who are trying to quit.

Speedcall Corporation, Hayward, CA
Rose Glover
(415)783-5611

Speedcall, a small company of 35 to 50 employees, has had a voluntary non-smoking program since 1978. Speedcall does not prohibit smoking, except in areas containing flamable liquids and the like. There is an incentive program: those who do not smoke at all during the 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. workday receive an extra $7.00 in their weekly paychecks. If someone "backslides" and smokes one week, the person is again eligible the following week to earn the bonus for not smoking. The program does not penalize smokers, only rewards those who do not smoke, and provides incentives (peer pressure and monetary awards) to support nonsmoking.

An important feature of this incentive is that backsliders can return to the program immediately. This helps discourage the attitude that "I've already fallen off the wagon so I might as well continue to smoke."

Southern New England Telephone, New Haven, CT
Laurel Minakan
(203)771-5769

Southern New England Telephone Company has a corporate commitment to offer a comprehensive health promotion program to its employees. Called Reach Out For Health, the program is provided to 14,000 employees throughout Connecticut. To encourage participation and continuing enthusiasm, numerous incentives are built into the program.

Health education is the backbone of the program and classes cover a variety of topics--effective parenting, consumer health skills, aging, nutrition awareness, weight control, smoking, and stress management. Most programs cost an employee from $10 to $35 which, in some cases, can be reimbursed after successful completion. Many times the reimbursement is in the form of a "gift" certificate that can be used to pay the entry fees for another health education class. For example, graduates from the Smokeless System who maintain a non-smoking status for six months receive a gift certificate equal to half the cost of the smoking program. Upon meetng three and six-month weight goals, weight-loss program participants receive two $10 gift certificates that can be redeemed at other classes. Incentives (posters, recipes, calorie calculators) also are given for attending monthly maintenance meetings. The Stress Management program holds De-Stress Contests and the first prize is a $25 gift certificate from a local sporting goods store. Participation in the YMCAs also is encouraged through discounted membership fees.

For both health education and fitness, the person who recruits seven other employees to form a class is rewarded with a free class. In addition, Reach Out for Health t-shirts, gym bags, hats, and mugs have been given to supportive employees for attendance at fitness classes and health fairs, to contest winners, etc.

Union Carbide Corporation, Danbury, CT
Deborah Lewis
(203)794-4667

At Union Carbide, the emphasis is on incentives that recognize personal achievements in health. The Union Carbide "Wall of Fame," located in the fitness center, contains lists of employees who have achieved personal, self-directed, short-term goals (usually of three months or less duration). These winners also receive t-shirts.

Each month, the staff selects one person as Star of the Month and his/her picture is placed permanently on the Wall. Staff say that the Star is often someone who has not previously seen himself/herself as a model of fitness, and becoming a Star boosts self-esteem.

Employees who complete Lifestyle Education activities also are listed on the wall and receive t-shirts. The Lifestyle Education program is a series of 15-minute mini health programs for independent study. To successfully complete the program, one must take 100 core topics and four electives. Completion of these activities demonstrates a keen interest in health on the part of the employee--an interest that the company wishes to recognize.

Participants in three program categories, cardiac rehabilitation, lifestyle management, and general--all of whom have significant health risk factors when they enter the programs--receive recognition for hours of participation. The names of those who have completed from 50 to 500 hours in the program are listed on the Wall of Fame, and they receive Health Plus (the logo of the Union Carbide activities) pencils, mugs, shirts, bags, etc. as they continue to exercise.

Participants in the fitness program receive 25 percent discounts on other "Health Plus" lifestyle change programs, including smoking cessation and stress-management courses.

Westlake Community Hospital, Midwest Center for Health Promotion,
Melrose Park, IL
Betsy K. Adrian
(312)681-3000 Ext. 3300

Westlake operates a Good Health Plan for employees with five incentive plans that can mean money in the pockets of employees, as well as support for their good health.

Westlake conducts an annual health appraisal (computerized risk appraisal, height, weight, blood pressure and blood tests) for all employees. Employees receive a bonus of $50 for participation. At the time of the appraisal, employees can qualify for additional bonuses. If blood pressure is within normal limits, the bonus is $25; weight within normal limits, $25; non-smoker, $25; seatbelt user, $25; annual dental checkup, $25. Guides to determine "normal limits" are provided to all employees.

The Westlake medical insurance plan for employees establishes a $150 deductible for a low-option program and $250 deductible for high option. If an employee has blood pressure and weight within normal limits and does not smoke, $150 of the deductible is waived if the employee files an insurance claim.

If an employee is injured in an automobile accident and is using a seatbelt at the time of the accident, 100 percent of any emergency care is paid (no deductible, no co-payment).

Employees can be reimbursed for 75 percent of the amount charged for a specific Lifestyle Program upon successful completion of the program. The cost is paid by the employee at enrollment and reimbursed upon participation in all scheduled sessions. Maximum reimbursement per year is $150 per employee for classes such as Smoke Stoppers, Be Trim, Be Fit, Personal Stress Management, and Eat Well.

Weyerhauser Company, Tacoma, WA
Ray Odmark
(206)593-7636

Weyerhauser believes that each of its operating companies should make its own decisions about health promotion programs and incentives; therefore, there are no programs mandated by the corporate headquarters. Corporate headquarters does, however, suggest two guidelines for incentives:

1) Incentives should not be part of the insurance plan. Health and wellness programs should be able to stand alone and not be dependent upon the rise and fall of health benefit costs.
2) Employees should be rewarded for behavior change, not for attendance or passive participation in programs.

The result of these guidelines is a varied list of incentives offered by Weyerhauser plants.

- At one plant, weight-loss contest winners (weight losers) were taken to dinner by their boss. No doubt it was a low-calorie feast.
- Another site offered Weyerhauser t-shirts and jackets to employees who had set health goals for themselves and achieved them.
- Several plants subsidize membership in local YMCAs to encourage physical fitness activities.
- Another plant manager awarded a $50 bonus to employees who quit smoking.

At corporate headquarters, each person who wished to do so set specific, personal health goals and contributed one dollar to a pool for each goal selected (up to five goals). The boss matched each dollar contribution with 50 cents. The names of those who achieved their goals were placed in a hat (once for each goal achieved) and 10 names were selected. Those selected divided the money in the pool.

The value of competition as an incentive cannot be overlooked. One Weyerhauser plant challenged another plant to a weight-loss competition--quickly dubbed "A Ton of Fat." One group lost a total of 2,000 pounds and the winning group lost 3,000 pounds. A prodigious effort--and the only reward was winning!

Xerox, Webster, NY
Richard E. Miller
(716)422-9051

The Xerox Health Management Program - called Take Charge - conducts quarterly activities with new incentives established for each quarter. For example, a weight control program - The Great Weight Race - uses five-person teams of employees and spouses who compete for trophies, merchandise, and health information packets. Each team sets a weight-loss goal of six to 20 pounds for each member to be lost over a 10-week period. Guidelines for safe weight loss are provided. Each person must lose at least seven pounds to be eligible for the prizes. Scoring is based on the percentage of weight lost toward the goal. The winning team gets a National Champion's trophy and the second through fifth place teams receive smaller trophies. Individual members of the winning teams choose a prize (scales, nutrition and cook books, jump ropes, golf shirts, sports bags, etc.). All participants receive a copy of a self-help guide to nutrition and healthy eating. In 1984, 196 teams completed the program. Anyone who loses at least 50 percent of the target weight loss gets a t-shirt.

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All About WBGH

The Washington Business Group on Health (WBGH), established in 1974, gives major employers a credible voice in the formulation of federal and state health policy. WBGH began with five companies and now works with more than 200 of the Fortune 500. WBGH members direct health care purchasing for 40 million of their employees, retirees and dependents.

In 1976, WBGH expanded to become the first national employer organization dedicated to medical care cost management. WBGH is an active participant in discussions, hearings and other aspects of the legislative and regulatory arena. It also serves as a reliable resource base providing information and expertise on a variety of health care issues and concerns as well as consulting to its members, government, other employers, health care providers, and the media.

WBGH, through its institutes and public policy division, provides long-range planning and analysis on many sensitive economic and social issues. As specific areas of need were identified, WBGH formed: the Institute on Aging, Work and Health; the Institute for Rehabilitation and Disability Management; the Institute on Organizational Health; and Family Health Programs. WBGH also publishes two magazines, *Business & Health* and *Corporate Commentary*, and other resource information, reports, studies, and surveys.

WGBH assists the business community through: the Policy Exchange telecommunications network; an annual conference to discuss new health policy issues, cost management strategies, benefit design solutions and health promotion ideas; formation of nationally recognized task forces on topics ranging from legal issues of interest to employers to tax policy; and numerous seminars on timely subjects such as AIDS and utilization data. WBGH has been instrumental in helping form over 35 local business health care coalitions across the country.